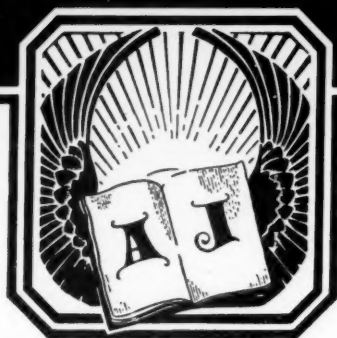


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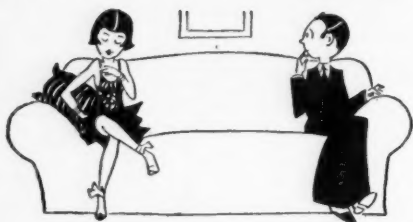
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## Checks and Rejections

Letters to the Editor—Comment from  
Writers—Editors—Readers

### THE FREE PRESENTATION PLAN

We do not seem to have started much of a controversy by publishing the suggestion of the American Writers Union for a "free presentation plan" of submitting manuscripts. Plenty of letters have been received, but they're all against it—thus far, at least.

Frankly, we believe that there are many things to be said in favor of it—but our correspondents have not said them.

The letters as a whole discuss the plan in much the same terms and disapprove it on much the same grounds. We shall not, therefore attempt to publish them all. A few sample comments will suffice:

From Harmon Bellamy, Springfield, Mass.

"Making additional copies of a manuscript would be an unwarranted expense, I feel. I'm sure most writers aim first for the better paying markets in each particular field. Should it chance, under the above plan, that a story be accepted quickly by a smaller house, I'm positive that the author—such is human nature—would bewail his fate. Why hadn't he been patient enough to wait for a bigger check from another editor? . . . The plan, I fear, would antagonize editors. It's a tough situation, perhaps, but after all they're the ones who make out the checks. Do I show a lack of backbone? Listen! If you're a big name and the editors are crying for your merchandise, you don't need the 'Free Presentation Plan.' If you're a small fellow, exactly what is it going to get you?"

From Kathleen Mow, Tucson, Ariz.

"What do I think of the plan? On first thought—great! Ten copies of my story in the mail instead of one, ten immediate chances at a sale, the opportunity to 'bargain' with the editors, insist on higher rates. . . . But wait, lemme think a minute. What was it P. Glasser said on that rejection note he wrote me yesterday? Something about a certain idea of mine being very 'unoriginal.' Maybe this idea won't turn out to be so original either. Maybe other writers will all be sending out at least ten copies of every tale they write. Maybe I'm in a pessimistic mood this morning, but something tells me editors aren't going to like writers who increase their mail tenfold and make themicker for every yarn they buy."

From Samuel Taylor, Palo Alto, Calif.

"For plays, scenarios, yes. Ordinary fiction, no. Books, maybe. There is one place in short fiction where the plan would have merit. Some publishers hang onto a manuscript from three to eight months, habitually. But then, I fancy the editors of those magazines don't get first-run stuff, and who cares a great deal about a script that has been everywhere else anyhow? Let's see what the plan would do to a professional writer doing, let's say, adventure shorts. The market is limited to about five chances. Say we do five yarns a month. Instead of having one with each editor, we have five with each within a 30 day period, which is about the usual period for deciding on a story if it's any good. My hunch is that an editor getting such a flood would be inclined to say, 'This guy sure has plenty of stuff floating around. It must not be worth much or it would be scarcer.' And when your five duplicates came back they would have exhausted the market, leaving an investment in typing that couldn't be got back."

From Nard Jones, Seattle, Washington:

"Let's have a look at the American Writers Union letter. It asks me to think what it would mean to me if I could present my story simultaneously to as many publishers as would be interested. All right, I will. It would mean a lot more postage and typing expense. Also it would mean that I wouldn't be playing very fair with a number of editors who have played fair with me over a long period. It says we should have the right to do this. I think I've always had the right. It might get me in hot water if two editors accepted the same story, but I still have the right."

"Wouldn't it be ironic if editors defended themselves with a 'Free Rejection Plan'? And we were all called out to the picket lines when we ought to be at the typewriters. Writers are selling more material today than ever before in history, and at better prices. But there's still no short cut, no way to eliminate that 'wasted time' the letter speaks about. I've been in it just long enough to know that. I'm for giving the new writer every break he can get—and I don't think this is a break at all for him."

Published Monthly at 1837 Champa Street, Denver, Colorado. Founded, 1916. Willard E. Hawkins, Editor; John T. Bartlett, Business Manager. Associate editors: John T. Bartlett, Harry Adler, David Raffelock, Frank Clay Cross. Entered as second-class matter April 21, 1916, at the Post Office at Denver, Colorado, under the act of March 3, 1879. All rights reserved. Subscription rates: \$2 per year, in advance; Canadian subscription, \$2.25; Foreign, \$2.50. Single copies, 20 cents. Advertising rates furnished on request.

# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

VOL. XXII. NO. 7

JULY  
1937

## THE MODERN DETECTIVE STORY

... By OTIS ADELBERT KLINE



Otis Adelbert Kline

SO many of the old-fashioned, straight deductive formula detective stories come to my desk these days, that I feel an article on the modern detective story would be helpful to a great many aspiring writers.

What is meant by the straight deductive formula? I can give it to you in a nutshell.

Here is how it was written in the old days with a thousand variations, until the reading public grew heartily tired of it:

John D. Morganbilt's butler found him lying on the luxurious Baluchi rug that adorned the floor of his library, weltering in a pool of his own blood. The butler called the police. A squad arrived, led by a burley blundering inspector, chief or lieutenant, who immediately proceeded to question witnesses and suspects, and perhaps make one or two false arrests. There were a number of people in the house, and a number who had been there, all of whom might have committed the murder, as every one of them had a grudge against Morganbilt.

The inspector got nowhere with the case, and the smart detective was called in. He began questioning witnesses and suspects, nosing out clues, pacing the floor, smoking his pipe, and deducing. Never was he in any danger, nor were those by whom he was employed in danger.

Mr. Kline is both a literary agent and an author, his own short-stories, serials, poems, novelettes, and novels having sold to a long list of publications in the United States, England, Canada, and continental Europe. Two of his novels have been reprinted by Grosset & Dunlap in the popular edition, and he has also contributed to the movies. His latest motion picture was adapted by Universal from his novel, "Jan of the Jungle."

The story went on endlessly with the minute tracing of clues, page after page of dialog which consisted of questioning and discussion, interspersed with pipe-smoking, floor-pacing, and deducing.

After interminable pages of this sort of thing, the detective assembled all witnesses and suspects in a single room, and told how the crime was committed, according to his deductions. At the end of his harangue, he pointed out the guilty party, who betrayed his guilt by promptly swallowing poison, seizing an officer's gun and shooting himself, or making a dash for freedom.

This general formula was published over and over, *ad infinitum* and *ad nauseam*, in the pulps of ten to fifteen years ago. But although the song has ended, it seems that the memory lingers on, for hundreds of student writers are still banging out and trying to peddle this obsolete formula.

You will observe that this story type depends solely on the element of mystery or puzzlement to hold the interest of the reader. Its sole appeal is that of a puzzle or problem, a sort of game between reader and writer in which the former tries to outguess the latter.

The element of mystery persists in the modern detective story, but there are other elements which editors consider equally important. Not the least of these is the element of plot conflict, for this is the source of suspense.

Suspense can only be the outcome of conflict or struggle. The difference between reading a story without plot conflict, and a story with it, is the difference between watching a

man shadow boxing and one who is boxing an opponent. In the former case, there is no contest, hence no suspense. In the latter case there is a contest, and spectators feel suspense as to the outcome.

Suspense is the thread that binds your story together—that holds your reader's interest. So conflict, which produces suspense, is the strongest story element, and the basis of all plot.

A third important element in writing the modern detective story is menace—menace to your detective hero, as well as to others in the story, particularly those whom he seeks to protect.

Menace makes your reader feel apprehension for the safety of your detective and other leading characters, thus increasing the reader's interest in your story.

Another important element in the modern detective story is action. I do not mean by this that the modern detective story should merely be a chronicle of violent physical action. Such stories have had their day, just as have the straight deductive yarns. I mean that there should be logical, carefully motivated action throughout the story. The story should be kept moving. Something interesting should be happening all the time.

Characterization is important in this type of story, as in any other. Your characters should stand out as living, breathing human beings, rather than puppets that move when the author pulls the strings.

In order to make them more easily recognizable by your reader whenever they appear on the stage, they can be "tagged." You can give each one certain peculiarities of appearance which will identify him in action, and certain characteristics of speech which will identify him in dialog.

I do not mean by this that you should go to extremes and burlesque the characters. You should simply make each leading character stand out so that he will be easily identified and recognized.

Which brings me to the matter of character description. Lengthy descriptions of your characters slow up your action, so it often is a good plan to *combine* character description with action. How? Simple enough.

"His keen, gray eyes flashed menacingly."

Here you describe a characteristic, and depict action at the same time.

"He banged the desk with his ham-like fist."

"He ran his slender, claw-like fingers through his thin graying locks."

With lines such as these you tag your characters, and keep the story moving at the same time.

You can tag the speech of some of your char-

acters by giving them favorite expressions or exclamations which they use under certain conditions. Foreign characters can of course be tagged with a foreign accent, usually suggested rather than completely written out. You can also contrast the speech of your cultured characters with those who are uneducated or uncouth. And you should not fail to depict, in all cases, the subtle differences between feminine and masculine expressions, exclamations, etc.

Women writers often unconsciously make their male characters talk like women—while men, though less frequently, sometimes make both men and women talk like men.

So much for character delineation.

Now how can the elements of suspense, menace and action be introduced into the mystery story?

As previously stated, suspense is always the result of conflict, so in order to build suspense you must introduce plot conflict.

This should be easy for you if you will stop to consider that the basis for plot conflict is already there in any murder mystery.

Conflict presupposes the existence of two or more opposing forces throughout a story. In the modern detective story, your detective is your hero. He is trying to accomplish something—to protect a client or the client's interests. Now the simplest way to introduce plot conflict into any story is to have a wily, resourceful villain. The more powerful, wily, and resourceful you make your villain, the stronger your conflict and suspense will be. So after you find the *corpus delicti*, you have, ready made, a source of plot conflict in the murderer and his friends, associates, or hirelings.

This person or group will be a force working against your detective hero, seeking to prevent him from apprehending the criminal, and perhaps endeavoring to kill others whom he seeks to protect, or to work against their interest in other ways. So your element of plot conflict is there, ready made for you, in any murder mystery. In the old-fashioned straight deductive story it was static—the murderer merely sought to keep from being discovered by keeping quiet about it, and perhaps by trying to throw the guilt on someone else. In the modern detective-action story, he does something about it. Your element of conflict is dynamic instead of static.

The element of menace follows logically and easily when you introduce active plot conflict. The villain and his associates fight back. They may try to kill the detective. They may capture him and even torture him. They may try to kill or abduct others whom he seeks to protect.

When there is conflict and menace there is bound to be action. And so the element of ac-



tion falls naturally into the scheme of things.

One of the oldest devices for introducing action, conflict, and menace is what I call the "chain-murder" device. It is still used today, and when well done, is quite effective. In fact, one well known detective magazine invariably uses the chain-murder formula in its lead novelette.

The chain-murder device consists of a series of murders which are related to the first, and which are committed either to conceal the identity of the murderer, or to accomplish some purpose which motivated the original crime, or both.

At the other end of the line is the straight action-detective yarn, which combines the mystery and action-adventure formulas. And there are numerous gradations and variations between these two.

In the very short detective stories an old type still persists—the "almost perfect crime" story, in which the reader sees the murderer committing his "perfect" crime, after which the law suddenly clamps down on him because of some little slip which he has made.

In this group another favorite is the "hoist by his own petard" story, in which the consequences of the murderer's act rebound to take his own life, or in which he loses his life in unsuccessfully attempting to commit a "perfect" murder.

This story type was popular as a short in the days of the old deductive formula, and reappears again and again, today.

What is the most popular type of detective story you can write today—the type that will have a chance in the largest number of markets?

It is the story which has a likeable detective character for a hero—a character with whom your reader can identify himself in order that he may vicariously experience his adventures.

It is the story that has an interesting criminal or villain and a colorful and perhaps exotic background.

The story with the eccentric, crabbed, uncouth or disagreeable detective hero is still written and sold, but it is in the minority.

The story with the sordid villain staged against a drab, uninteresting background, is also written and sold, but it is likewise very much in the minority.

What about the gangster story?

Most of the old-time magazines that featured the gangster story have folded up. The few that are published today do not pay as good rates as the average detective-story magazine, and do not have large circulations. Most editors of detective magazines believe their readers are fed up on gangster yarns, and other things being

equal, will take the other type every time in preference. Some editors do not even care to read gangster yarns.

The advent of the G-man movies a couple of years ago brought with it the type of gangster story in which G-men relentlessly pursue public enemies Nos. 1, 2, 3, etc. There are several magazines featuring this type of yarn exclusively, and paying good rates. Other magazines like to run one or two per issue.

The gangster, however, is necessarily the sordid type of criminal or villain. He is seldom as colorful as the international spy, banker, lawyer, doctor, capitalist, or person from everyday common walks of life who for one reason or another has turned criminal.

As a rule, he resorts to violent physical action, where other criminals accomplish their ends in a more wily and resourceful manner—with a little more finesse.

Some readers prefer one type, some the other, but the modern trend is toward the more colorful type of criminal.

In writing the modern detective story, the author should not overlook the value of establishing a good character-continuity series.

There are three general types.

In the first, the chief character is the detective hero, always on the side of law and order. This type is exemplified by Philo Vance or Charlie Chan.

In the second, we have the Robin Hood type, at loggerheads both with the police and the underworld. He destroys criminals. He often robs the rich to pay the poor, as did Robin Hood, hence the designation. The Moon Man is a good example of this type.

In the third, the outstanding character is the villain. The detective character is secondary. Such a story type is exemplified by Sax Rohmer's Fu Manchu.

The foregoing suggestions apply chiefly to the great pulp detective field. They are subject to some modification when applied to the smooth-paper detective story, or to the detective or mystery novel for book publication.

The changes in this field have been more gradual, but they are taking place, just the same.

Changes of style in stories may be compared to changes of style in clothing.

In men's suits, the most radical changes are first noted in the cheap, ready-made clothing. In the more expensive and particularly the tailor-made clothing, the changes are more gradual.

New fiction trends first manifest themselves in the pulps, and it is here that they change most swiftly and radically. The more conservative slicks follow the lead—but slowly. And

most of the book publishers are equally conservative.

In spite of the inroads made by Western, air-war, and some other types of magazines, the detective-story field remains one of the largest and most important in this country. And it is equally important in many other countries. A great many detective and mystery stories are published in England each year. The same is true of the Scandinavian countries, where eighty per cent of the shorts and novels I have placed have been detective stories.

As for Germany and Austria, the popularity

of this story form can be illustrated by the fact that out of eighteen novels sent me by a large Berlin publisher, for the sale of rights in this country, Canada and England, sixteen were detective and mystery novels, "*Kriminal Romane*" as they are called in Germany.

Good detective stories furnish entertainment for both the classes and the masses—for the educated and the uneducated—in the leading nations of the world. I have an idea that in some modified form they will entertain our great-grandchildren, and perhaps their great-grandchildren as well.

## Novels Don't Write Themselves—Says Lloyd C. Douglas

. . . An Interview by FRANK PIAZZI

"I'VE written three novels. None of them ever wrote themselves. I did the writing.

I got my idea, mulled it over until it developed possibilities, then wrote it. I had to write it. Sometimes I've written 'blind,' not knowing definitely where my characters were heading for. But always I wrote."

That briefly sums up the method of Lloyd C. Douglas, author of those best-selling novels, "Magnificent Obsession," "Green Light," and "White Banners."

For those writers ready to essay their first novel, Douglas analyzed present reading trends of the American public to indicate that the serious novel, the novel pointing a moral or built around a serious thesis, is gaining in favor over the purely entertainment novel.

Discussing his own experience in the novel field, Douglas frankly admitted that the astounding success of his first novel, "Magnificent Obsession," was a greater surprise to him than to anyone else.

"I'd always felt that my metier was the serious essay," he said. "For years I'd embodied my ideas in essays for *Scribner's*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, magazines of the serious type.

"Then I witnessed an accident that presented me with an unusual idea. A young wastrel ne'er-do-well caused the death of a prominent man whose position in his community was of the greatest value and service to that community.

"I thought this over for some time, thinking to myself that it might develop into an excellent story if that young wastrel, sobered by the accident he had caused, and in which such a

worthy man had been killed, should dedicate himself to the work in which the deceased had been engaged and carry on that work, thereby reforming his own hitherto useless life.

"I felt that I had here an idea too big for an essay. So I wrote a novel—my first. I wrote 'blind'. I had no idea how my characters were going to act or what they would do next. Whenever I'd written ten or twenty pages I'd read them to my wife. Occasionally she would say that some of my characters or incidents weren't right—that people in real life didn't think, talk, or act the way I'd written them.

"Nevertheless, I eventually finished the novel. I didn't know myself what I had when I finished it. I sent it out to Harper's, the book publishers. They returned it in six weeks. Their opinion was that while I had a good story, the religious-mystical element in the book was bad. If I'd eliminate that they'd be glad to reconsider the book.

"I didn't want to do that so I sent the manuscript to Doubleday-Doran. They rejected it also, saying that the story was bad, but that the religious-mystical elements, if taken by themselves, could be published as a book of essays!

"This didn't suit me either. I sent the manuscript to a Chicago publisher of religious books. They agreed to venture a 2500-copy edition of it. This sold slowly and they published 1500 more copies and then the demand began coming in for the book. In the first year it went to thirteen printings."

Since then, Douglas revealed, it has gone through forty-seven printings in the United States, eight in Canada, four in England, and



Lloyd C. Douglas

has been translated into a number of other languages.

"I wrote that novel 'blind'—with no plot outline, schedule script, or anything," Douglas said.

He writes from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. every day, without even stopping for lunch. And this period is a "closed zone" to all other activities, wherein no interruptions are permitted.

"A 100,000-word novel doesn't write itself. It's got to be written by the author. And there's only one way to do it, that is by writing. Write every day—in good health or bad—rain or

shine—whether you feel like it or not. And no excuses," he advised would-be novelists.

Douglas, a 59-year-old retired minister, takes infinite pains in securing exact technical data on whatever subject he writes. For his novels he has employed skilled doctors to give him daily instructions over a period of months on medical problems he planned to use in his story, paying for the advice at regular medical consultation rates.

His subsequent two novels, "Green Light" and "White Banners," were both published serially in *Cosmopolitan Magazine*.

"Green Light," he says, began publication before he had finished it. As a result, the final chapters of the story were literally torn from his typewriter to be rushed to the waiting presses.

Of that high-pressure experience he said: "Never again!"

One incident in his writing career drew a quiet chuckle from him as he recalled it. He had written a short-story called "The Apostasy of Fan Bascom." It made the rounds of all the slick-paper magazines and he was about ready to start it on a round of the pulps when his first novel clicked.

"I retyped the first and last pages of the rather dog-eared manuscript," Douglas said, "and sent it to *American Magazine*. I got a nice fat check for it. Same story, no changes, that had been rejected many times before I became known for 'Magnificent Obsession.' You may draw your own moral to that."

## WHAT DOES THE JUVENILE FIELD OFFER WRITERS?

By FRANKLIN M. RECK

Managing Editor *American Boy*

I HAVE been asked recently whether a writer can make a living by working solely for the juvenile field. Well—a number of writers are doing it, either by turning out a large volume of manuscripts and selling the output to assorted Sunday-school publications as well as the larger monthly boys' magazines; or by converting nearly everything they write into books which continue to sell year after year, thereby supplementing magazine checks.

Probably, however, the best solution for the writer is to cultivate the juvenile field in combination with other writing, or with a regular job. We have several writers who teach school. We have one who does Chamber of Commerce publicity; another who runs a country newspaper; one who edits a fraternal magazine; and quite a few who sell both to us and adult magazines.

It would pay more writers of adult stories to give thoughtful study to the juvenile field as a method of adding to their yearly output and their yearly income. Our standards of fiction are the same as those of good

magazines everywhere. Women mustn't predominate in our stories; young-man heroes are preferable to elderly ones; stories of futility and despair don't interest us because futility and despair are the diseases of age, not youth. Aside from these few points, we accept and look for adult standards of writing. We point the magazine at the 16-year-old, and a reader of this age pierces through sham, ignores "big names," and demands stories that can deliver the punch.

Any writer of adult stories who wishes seriously to cultivate *The American Boy* will find our staff willing to take the time to educate him to our particular needs. We will work with him on plot, revisions, and ideas. We pay on acceptance, and we reject or accept usually within a week—never more than two weeks. On seasonal stories—sports, Christmas, Fourth of July yarns—we often report within two days. We have always adhered to the principle that an author is entitled to a prompt answer to queries and manuscripts.

# GAGS AND GAG WRITING

... By CHET SWITAL



Chet Swital

MOST of this country's leading gag writers and jokesmiths agree on one point: that there are no new gags or jokes. That would seem to be a startling statement to make at the outset, but an even more startling one is that all told there are only about fifty thousand original jokes or gags. Beyond this original fifty thousand the gags begin to repeat themselves with slight variations.

Or, put differently, try as you may to give birth to an original gag, you will find upon investigation that this gag is in one form or another in the stock of the original fifty thousand. This should serve to encourage rather than discourage those who are ambitious to become gag writers, because from the very beginning you are aware of the fact that your gag must have a new dress, and make-up in the proper places. You immediately dress your gag up with some current news item, give it a new twist and a smash finish and, presto! You've knocked out a gag which is new to the average reader.

To illustrate: As this is being written the Black Legion of Detroit is front-page stuff in the nation's papers. We wish to base a cartoon idea on it so, for our background, we show the front of the headquarters of the Black Legion with a large sign announcing this fact. In the door window is a small sign reading: "OUT TO LYNCH—BACK SHORTLY." It can readily be seen that the gag is but an up-to-date variation of the old chestnut where on the door of a lunch room window hangs a sign reading, "OUT TO LUNCH—BACK AT 1." Both gags are feeble but they serve to illustrate the simple point in mind.

Radio comic Fred Allen uses this method to a good advantage. He disguises many of his Joe Miller gags behind some present-day news item. Phil Baker, another top-flight comic, recently wrote: "Making people laugh is no laughing matter, and my study of the sources of humor convinces me that quips about personalities in

Chet Swital's first literary effort was a political speech for a ward healer. He liked the work, so got a job on a local paper. He worked as a reporter, as hack writer, ghost writer, copyreader, rewrite and desk man for various newspapers, was Chicago correspondent for the New York Star, theatrical magazine, and later press agent for a burlesque association, where he learned the importance of gags. Has sold to practically every humor market. At present is freelancing in the radio gag market and supplies a number of cartoonists with material, including Ty Mahon and George Lichty.

the day's news are the biggest laugh-getters. In the past three years, rate these five personalities as the ace sources of gags: (1) Mae West, (2) the Dionnes, (3) Mahatma Ghandi, (4) Peggy Joyce, (5) Primo Carnera." Jack Benny uses this method, but in a very subtle form, and with the butt of the joke turned at him.

To avoid a maximum of disappointments, pick your market, whether it be a cartoonist, a comic, or a periodical; study the type of humor he (or the periodical) is most identified with, then study the style, the quirks, and leanings of the market you choose. You cannot submit your material helter-skelter to the first market that comes to your mind and expect to make a sale. Be sure your humor is properly slanted at a certain market and forthwith mail your typescript.

A case in mind of the wrong way to go about it is a young chap of my acquaintance to whom I had given some pointers on the sex gag. I instructed him to study the market he was aiming at carefully and then to sit down and knock out his gags for that market. My entreaty went unheeded. The young man heard that *The New Yorker* was paying fifteen dollars for cartoon ideas with gag-lines, so he promptly typed ten crude sex jokes on a sheet of paper and mailed these gems to *The New Yorker*. By return mail his material was back home, but this did not incite the young man to analyze his humor to ascertain the reasons for its rejection. Instead he mailed it to another slick-paper market and again it was rejected with great dispatch. He mailed it out again and again but the typescript had acquired the homing instinct and came home with striking regularity. A sale was obviously not to be made in the slick-paper field. The young man came to me with his tattered MS.; he dropped it on my desk and asked me just what was the matter with the jokes. I read them over and told him there was nothing the matter with the jokes as they were; they were typically the kind of barrel-house jokes that *Jim Jam Jems* magazine once liked to buy at twenty-five cents each. The jokes had too much sex, they were crude and wide-open. Imagine aiming a twenty-five cent joke at a fifteen dollar market. That seems to be the



trouble with most aspiring gag-writers. They suffer under the impression, because the *New Yorker* will occasionally print what is considered by many a shocking gag, that the editors will accept almost any pool-parlor joke. They don't stop long enough to dissect a *New Yorker* gag; if they did they would find that if it really is shocking it is hidden behind the cleverest subtlety possible. *The New Yorker* or any other class magazine will gladly pay fifteen dollars for a cartoon idea with a gag-line if it is clever, amusing and *subtle*.

The American sense of humor is wide and varied in scope; it encompasses every possible phase of life, matter, and pattern. It was Jowett, master of Balliol, who once said that every amusing story must of necessity be unkind, untrue, or immoral. The English go that one better; to quote a famous English humorist: "No joke is really funny unless it has a bit of irony in it." Witness this typical example: An inebriated English gentlemen in full dress boards a tram-car; he balances himself unsteadily with his cane as he stands on the rear platform watching the conductor perform his duties. Finally he inquires, "I say, old man! How long have you been a conductor?" "Twenty years, m' lord," is the answer. "I thought so," rejoins the gentleman. "You punch those transfers remarkably well."

Compare that with a typical American joke also involving a drunk. The scene is the lobby of a concert hall with placards and signs announcing the fact that a famous foreign pianist is giving his farewell recital. The doorman is speaking to the drunk. "I'm sorry sir, you can't go in there; you're drunk!" To which the drunk replies, "Of coursh, I'm drunk! You don't think I would want to go in there if I was sober, do you?" This type of joke is what is known as a space-filler but if you slant it at the style of some comedian it can readily be made over into an "explosion" gag. You merely precede it with some humorous banter and then deliver the last line with "explosion," something like this:

Drunk walking up to doorman in lobby of theatre, "What's playin' here tonight, general?"

Doorman: "The great Constantino Polipatchkavichovitz is giving his farewell recital."

Drunk: "Is that so. How's about a Mickey Mouse comedy?"

Doorman: "Sorry, sir. Nothing but the recital."

Drunk: "What, no Mickey Mouse? What kind of a joint is this?" He fumbles in his pocket for coins and adds, "I think I'll go in anyway."

Doorman: "But you can't go in there; you're drunk."

Drunk: "Well you don't think I'd wanna go in if I was sober, do you?"

A word about the "explosion"; everything should lead up to it, nothing—not one word or even a syllable—should follow the "explosion." This is mentioned simply because fully two-thirds of the material offered for sale on the market today disregards this principle.

The "explosion" joke I like best contains a "smash finish." Much can be learned from its brevity, "explosion," and smash, and incidentally it is supposed to have been the only joke that ever made the late Florenz Ziegfeld gaffaw. Here it is: Two coryphees after an evening out return to the small hotel at which they are staying. Not familiar with the surroundings, one of the girls mistakes the elevator shaft for the staircase and steps in. There is a dull thud, then silence, and finally a voice floats up to the girl above: "Watch that first step, Adamandra, it's a beaut." (Whenever I use a name in a gag-line I try to make that name as odd as possible, it helps the gag.)

The best gags are pictures out of real life. They must disclose the situation in the briefest manner possible, at the same time permitting the reader to see beyond the situation. The climax must be brief and have smash; in a few words it must bring together the essence of all that has gone before in such a way as to give a revelation to the reader. There must be no wasted words. People today are as hungry for laughs as they were throughout the ages but the joke today must be of the flash type. It must "start at the crack of the pistol," and if it contains a new sensation, all the better.

Humor is only as simple as you make it; the more you elaborate on it the more you complicate it and the more unfunny it becomes.

Let's pick out a joke from Grandma's almanac; it may sound very stupid and yet with skillful treatment and window-dressing and extensive alterations that joke can be transformed into an "explosion" gag. Here's one taken at random: "My father is a peer," utters the Englishman. "And my father is a doc," answers the American. Inasmuch as "And my father is a doc" is the "explosion," though a very weak one, nothing should follow, but it needs a little more build-up; for example, like this: "What a coincidence," rejoins the American. "My father is a doc."

Will Rogers was one of the greatest extemporaneous humorists in the world and yet in all probability the joke that made Ziegfeld laugh would fall flat if told by Will Rogers. It wasn't his type of joke. The beginner can best realize the futility of it by getting a clear picture of the Rogers style of delivery and then imagining him telling the joke. That's the reason why I keep stressing the point of studying your market. And, while mentioning Will Rogers, I

should like to tell a seldom repeated quip of his. Just prior to his fatal flight in Alaska, Will Rogers attended one of those "wild" Hollywood parties and during the course of the evening the hostess started one of those epitaph games. The object is to pick some celebrity in the room and make up a fitting epitaph for that person's tombstone. When it came to be Will Rogers' turn he picked a certain much married motion picture actress and suggested for her epitaph the following inscription: "ASLEEP ALONE AT LAST." Then as he walked toward the door he uttered in an aside, "Nobody loves a fact man."

But back to business: You can begin your gag-writing career by slanting your gags at some trade, craft, professional, or hobby periodical. If the MS. should come back post haste, dissect your gags, find out what ails them, remedy the ills and remail them to another periodical in the same field of your original slanted aim. The market is wide open and there is no reason why your gags can't be sold if they

are properly slanted. The pay is anywhere from fifty cents to three dollars for one gag or joke. After you've had a good start in this field, and only then, I would advise you to try your hand at the class market. In this field you have to be individualistic in your treatment of a gag and you must become identified with a style of delivery. Here the pay is up to six dollars and better a gag, but it must be written expressly with that certain magazine in mind. From this point you climb slowly until you wind up with a Hollywood contract as a gag-writer, just as a young lady did recently. She outlined a comedy in fifteen typewritten pages and sold the idea to Harold Lloyd for fifteen thousand dollars. That's a thousand dollars a page, a new high in gag-writing. It also serves to show that gag-writing is open to the woman as well as the man.

In closing I would like to repeat what Charlie Chaplin once said to a fellow player: "What you're doing is funny—but don't be funny while you're doing it."

## AGONIES OF ORIGINALITY

By PEGGY HOFFMAN

A poet struggles countless times  
To fashion verse with endings new . . .  
Then reads another poet's rhymes—  
Discovering he found them, too.

## ERNEST HAYCOX'S DEFINITION OF A HERO

By ELLA B. WRIGHT

THEY tell a story about Ernest Haycox . . . His first published yarn came out in a Western pulp magazine while he was attending the University of Oregon. The news got round to the Professor of English, and this learned gentleman, mentally holding his nose, squandered fifteen cents to see what his pupil had done. In class that afternoon the Professor announced that he had read Mr. Haycox's story and would Mr. Haycox please hand over fifteen cents? The very young author complied. Then, with a smile, the Professor returned the fifteen cents and said, "However, I don't wish to embarrass you financially—merely artistically."

But the laugh is on the Professor.

The way Ernest Haycox's name jumps at us from the covers of slicks and pulps alike, we suspect that it would be a difficult matter to embarrass him financially, right now.

He could merry well thumb his nose at the world but he's not that kind of a fellow. The lecture which he gave at the Oregon Conference of Writers was full of things vital to all struggling young authors. We liked especially his secret of characterization: contrast and contradiction.

He stressed the building of characters. "It is one of the most important parts of story building because a story is the *result* of characters impinging and col-

liding. Plot is important, of course, but if you find your actors taking the story in their own hands and doing things to that carefully-planned plot of yours—consider yourself lucky."

Such characters he said would, without a doubt, be living, breathing human beings with noble qualities—and weaknesses. These upstart people should be controlled only to the extent of keeping the minor characters in their places. To avoid confusion and to keep each one a separate personality, give him a mannerism or a physical label; but don't forget that this, like every good thing, can be overdone. After writing three drafts of a story (Ernest Haycox does it) you should be able to "feel" whether a label is a stumbling block or a prop.

However, he looks with disfavor upon the trick of labeling actors *Greed, Pride, Jealousy, Beauty*, etc., in the original drafts of your story, because this practice tends to make rigid and unnatural characters. Writers and editors—and readers—are becoming more and more aware of the fact that no person is entirely good or entirely bad; even the villain should have one soft spot.

Out of these beliefs Ernest Haycox has built himself a definition of a hero: "Make him a good man but give him *possibilities* of badness."

That, somehow, is like a great, golden dawn.

# GO TO THE POULTRYMAN, THOU WRITER

. . . By WILL F. JENKINS



Will F. Jenkins

THE analogy between writing and the poultry business was first brought to my mind by the fact that it is a writer—and a good one—who is responsible for poultry-raising being a business instead of a form of dissipation. He thought of lighting chicken-

houses and making the chickens dissipate, staying up late, so that a poultryman now draws his profits from his chicken roadhouses. I'm quite serious. Ask a farmer.

The analogy goes much farther than its origin. There is the matter of breeds. A farmer who wants to sell eggs to the New York market raises white leghorns or black Minorcas, which lay white eggs. If he wants to sell to the Boston market he raises Rhode Island reds or plymouth rocks, which lay brown ones. He suits his product to his most practicable market, and he has found that good stock pays. But there are a good many writers who work with decidedly scrub stocks of ideas, and pay no heed whatever to their markets. As poultrymen they would choose their poultry breeds with painstaking care. Surely they wouldn't try to raise bantams or game chickens—and you can choose for yourself which represents, say the "guts" school of literature—as a business matter for either the egg or fowl-meat market. But look at the stuff they send out! And if a man can't tell what breed of ideas suits a given magazine market, he'd better learn. What's *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST* for, anyhow?

Another thing. After a poultryman has chosen the breeds he proposes to deal in, and has gotten a flock to start with, he culls. He does not raise more than an occasional cockerel for the contentment of his flock and a few extra for the nourishment of his family. He picks out the hens whose conformation and general condition does not look promising—from his experience and what information he can get

from authorities—and he scraps them. Writers would do well to imitate the lowly poultryman. Too many people, entirely, consider that any idea which will make a story is too precious to be thrown away. But it isn't. Unless an idea will make a good story or can be doctored up to make a good one, it needs the axe. Your poultryman, certainly, does not feed hens which are not producers. But writers take a story which has been turned down anywhere, and rewrite it, and get it turned down everywhere all over again, and rewrite it again, and again, and again. I don't. I consider that some ideas are born runts, and I treat them in the only practical fashion. Pfft!

The subject of roosters recurs. Poultrymen raise them. Writers should, too—in moderation. For my own spiritual nourishment, as well as for the improvement of the breed of stories I write, every so often I do a story which nobody ought to buy, but which I want to write just for the hell of it. I find the practise desirable. Nearly every break I've ever had in writing, whether a new market or a raise in rates, has come from a yarn that by all the rules nobody should have bought, but somebody did. So I am strong for roosters, in due proportion to the rest of the flock. But you have to know something about the business even to turn out decent roosters, and nobody can make a living raising nothing else.

A poultryman is in the business for exactly one purpose—to produce eggs or chickens of as good a quality, in as large a quantity, and in as painless a fashion as he can. Selling his product is a different end of the business. The selling end has to be considered. Of course! But the production end, once the business is out of the way, is entirely separate. And writing is best conducted in exactly the same way. But the average amateur does not consider himself as trying to write good stories, but salable ones. I am inclined to think that the only people who have a really amateur viewpoint toward writing are the professionals. Show me an amateur writer and I will show you a man who is frantic for literary fame, or riches, or maybe something else, but rarely a man who has the honest-to-god ache to turn out a damned good piece of work whether he gets paid for it or not. When he gets that ache he rates professional—financially as well as otherwise.

Will F. Jenkins is known as a pulp writer under the pen-name of "Murray Leinster." He has published 700 pulp stories, fourteen books, and under his own name has appeared in *Colliers*, *Liberty*, *Blue Book*, *Scribner's*, *Country Gentleman*, etc.

The professional writer goes to the poultry-man. He looks to his market, and he develops a breed or breeds of ideas to fit that market. And then he sets to work to turn out stories of as good a quality, in as large a quantity, and in as painless a fashion as he can. And for the improvement of his stuff as well as for the nourishment of his soul, now and again he

turns out the equivalent of a rooster—a story which nobody ought to buy but which he writes just for the hell of it.

And sometimes somebody buys it regardless. That's how the good stories get written.

P.S. I don't raise chickens. I tried to, once, and they all died.

## COLLECTION LETTERS IN VERSE

. . . By MARGARET A. BARTLETT  
*Managing Editor, Bartlett Service*

THERE'S more than one way to make money with rhymes!

Have you a collection difficulty?

Has some editor with whom you have long had friendly, and satisfactory, relations "slipped," failed to send money, due, failed, even, to answer your letters?

You don't want to "get hard," threaten suit, call names, for, after all, you still value the friendship of the delinquent, and you still hope to do business with him in the future. But you've tried every appeal you can think of in your letters to him—and still there comes no reply.

Going over our accounts near the end of the year, I discovered a handful of just such delinquents. It was just before Christmas. In little "asides" from editing and marketing copy, I had been writing jingles to go with Christmas gifts. Somehow, I felt in a gay and jingly mood, albeit a money-collecting one.

Gradually I sensed a collection-jingle coming on. I threw down my pencil, went to the typewriter, and the following resulted:

Dear L. D.—

I've tried a letter court-e-ous  
To get a word from you;  
But still there is no word to us—  
What can a person do?

I've set my lips, and been polite,  
I really haven't pressed;  
But still I get no answer to  
My letters from the West.

So, since plain letters fail, Old Friend,  
I'm bursting forth in verse;  
It may be terrible, but still,  
Your silence, Sir, is worse!

It's time for Christmas greetings,  
But all I can say, By Heck!  
Is "You'll have a merrier Christmas  
If you write or send a check!"

So here am I a-hoping  
The Good Saint will speak to you,  
And I'll have a right good answer,  
By Air Mail, P. D. Q.!

Written on our letterhead, with informal salutation, the letter was sent to our list of "friendly delinquents."

The first reply, accompanied by a check in full, was a clever apology in verse. Said the writer:

Dear Mr. B.:  
To your courteous notes  
At long last comes reply.  
Flushed deep with shame and dark regret  
A contrite clod am I.

To treat a friend as I have you,  
Should win a boil-in-oil—  
A breaking on the wheel or rack—  
A "stir" term at hard toil.

For far less have men oft been shot;  
How can I win your grace?  
What shall I do to be saved, Oh Lord,  
Or even save my face?

A check may help to patch the rift  
And friendship's wound may close,  
If you will only hear my case  
Which follows here in prose:

The prose that followed gave confidential "reasons why" no payment had been made—but, there was a check! In full!

Shortly after, replies from all the letters were in, some with checks, some with profuse apologies, clear statement of conditions, and promise of payment shortly.

In every case friendship had been cemented, goodwill retained and a collection made or promised.

So, if you are a jingler, don't hesitate to use your talent (tiny though it may be) to write that "different" collection letter, so necessary in dealing with friendly debtors who, for some unknown reason, won't reply. You may easily find that there is more money in the verse that collects than in the one that sells!



# WRITING THE JUVENILE STORY

. . . By HAROLD S. KAHM



Harold S. Kahm

JUST as the slick and pulp magazines' stories are largely written to formula, so also are the stories appearing in the boys', girls', and young people's magazines published by religious organizations. Unless a story written for this group possesses certain definite qualifications it

has small chance of sale. If it does possess them, and if it is at all adequately written, a paying market can almost invariably be found.

The formula for the juvenile story is not a difficult one to master. It is my purpose to present this formula here, as I have developed it after many years of writing for the religious publishing house periodicals.

One of the chief elements of the story is this:

*Reward for the practice of a moral virtue.*

Another variety of approach is this one:

*Punishment for failure to practice a moral virtue.*

Now, just what are these virtues? I have made a list of some of them which I consult when I wish to turn out a salable yarn. Here is the list:

- Loyalty.
- Bravery.
- Do good to enemies.
- Turn the other cheek.
- Tell the truth.
- Honor thy father and mother.
- Obedience to elders, to authority.
- Faith in God.
- Prayer.
- Charity.
- Self-sacrifice.
- Love one another.
- Get others to practice virtue.

The rewards for practicing these virtues, or rather, one of them, may be as follows:

- Success.
- Money.
- Honor.
- Friendship.

Mr. Kahm has sold to a large number of the religious publications for young people. His previous articles in the A. & J. will be recalled, particularly, "I Wrote My Way to Europe."

- Love.
- Fame.
- Respect.
- Forgiveness.
- Happiness.
- Good fortune.
- Or a combination of any of these.

To proceed with the writing of the story, place a character—a boy, girl, or young man or woman—in a situation where the following problem confronts him:

1. To attain something he desires, he is tempted to proceed along unworthy lines, because to practice virtue will be painful or costly. In other words, he is sorely tempted to do the wrong thing.

*Next,*

2. There is a struggle and he finally does the right thing, expecting disaster. He is rewarded instead, everything turning out beautifully, and if possible in such a way as to convince him that had he done what he had originally planned to do (the wrong thing) he would surely have failed.

*Or,*

3. He does the wrong thing and is punished as a direct cause of this—he fails, or meets disaster. Then in the end he realizes that he was wrong, and is penitent, and turns over a new leaf.

The struggle, when there is one, may be with self, with nature and the elements, or with some harmful enemy.

In a story where the character does the wrong thing and is punished (by failure or disaster), the wrong thing may be one of the following:

- Disloyalty.
- Cowardice.
- Revenge.
- Disobedience.
- Lying.
- Stealing.
- Selfishness.
- Cruelty.
- Stubbornness.
- Ill will.
- Meanness.
- Bragging.

Here is an example of a juvenile story—one of my recent ones—showing the reward-for-virtue formula in operation:

A boy going to college is faced by the fact that he hasn't enough money to see him through

the term; his father has lost his position and cannot help him, and he cannot find a part-time job.

He meets another boy who is actually starving, takes pity on him and takes him home with him—he occupies a small furnished room. He takes care of this new friend—supports him completely, and in short order his money is all gone—he is actually down to his last cent, and shows it to his friend and tries to laugh about it.

The other boy says, "Let me see that penny!" and grabs it. It proves to be a rare Indian-head penny, worth five hundred dollars!

Thus the boy who had charity in his heart, and who sacrificed his own safety and welfare for another, was rewarded by having his entire problem solved. Had he *not* taken this other fellow home with him, he would never have noticed that penny, knowing nothing about coin-collecting, which was his friend's hobby.

The title of this story was, "His Last Cent." It sold the first trip out and brought a prompt check.

Another story illustrates the punishment angle:

A boy—a youngster—brags that he can run an airplane, which is not true; he is fond of bragging about how good he is. On an aviation field, friends dare him to jump into a plane and take it up. He gets into the cockpit, mortally afraid, and touches the instrument board, and the plane suddenly starts up and takes off. He is scared half to death, not knowing that there is a pilot concealed in the rear cockpit handling the duo-controls. The pilot is in on the plot to cure him of his habit of bragging. And is he cured! He admits his error and swears he will never be so foolish again. This story also sold the first trip out.

Chiefly, the juvenile story for religious publications is a moral lesson told in the form of a modern, up-to-date parable. But the moral, while present, must be brought out in the action—not in the form of a preachment.

Stick to this formula and watch your sales go up!

## THE WINEPRESS

By PEGGY HOFFMAN

I crushed the fruit that hung upon  
The Sacred vine,  
But all the vintage I distilled  
Seemed bitter wine.

But now I sing the while I toil,  
As all men should . . .  
For some have quaffed the wine I pressed—  
And found it good.

## COLLECTING MANUSCRIPTS THROUGH THE EXPRESS AGENCY

"SUCH-AND-SUCH Magazine has held my story for several months. It neither reports nor pays any attention to my letters of inquiry. What can I do about it?"

This is the substance of inquiries received almost daily by the editors of *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST*. Unfortunately, there is little that a writer can do by mail to enforce reports from dilatory editors or publishers. In most cases, however, a return of the material can be accomplished through the collection department of the Railway Express Agency. We have known this method of recovering manuscripts to succeed when all other means had failed. Here is the procedure:

Write to the company or individual holding the manuscript that you are authorizing the Railway Ex-

press Agency to call for the manuscript, and request that it be ready for the agent when he calls.

Write a letter to the Railway Express Agency authorizing it to collect for you the manuscript (giving its title) from the concern or individual holding it.

Then fill out the blank which the Railway Express Agency furnishes for the collection of money, except that in the space allotted for a cash amount should be written, "Manuscript entitled So-and-So."

This letter and order should be turned over to the nearest branch of the Railway Express Agency.

The Railway Express Agency will call for the manuscript, wrap it up if necessary, and return it to you. If it is unable to secure the manuscript, it will report the reason for failure to obtain it. Nominal express rates only are charged for this service. The agency will collect any article desired, on this same basis. If the procedure is not clear, full instructions may be obtained from your local express agent.

# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST'S LITERARY MARKET TIPS

GATHERED MONTHLY FROM AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES

Popular Publications, 205 E. 42nd St., New York, are now buying material for a new monthly Western magazine, which will be edited by Ralph Perry. The title has not been announced. Mr. Perry writes: "We are looking for novelettes from 10,000 to 15,000 words in length. The shorter Western is always in great demand. We will use no articles, fillers, or poetry. The period will be the heyday of the cattle industry, roughly between the years 1868 and 1892, and the setting the cattle country. We will not use Alaskan stories and are not especially in favor of mining stories. The editorial requirements first are for a clear-cut character, true to the period, in a dramatic fighting clash. The backbone of the stories will be gun fights, but the fights must be motivated, preferably by showing the economic and range reasons which necessitate gun-play. I would recommend that writers anxious to sell to this book go to the first-hand sources rather than to other Western magazines. Try to show the cowboy as he was, with his humor, courage, love of horseplay, and frequent naivete. Love interest is welcome if the plot of the story requires it. If so, the girl should have a real part in the plot. Absolutely no sex material. Payment is at 1 cent a word and up, on acceptance."

*Railroad Magazine* is to be the title of the former *Railroad Stories*, issued by the Frank A. Munsey Company, 280 Broadway, New York, beginning with the September issue. Freeman H. Hubbard, editor, writes: "No change will be made in editorial policies. This magazine, established in 1906, adopted the word 'Stories' in 1932 because we felt that an emphasis on fiction was necessary at that time. Now, with a pick-up in the railroad industry and a much wider 'fan' interest, we no longer feel that anything is to be gained by baiting our title with the word 'Stories,' although each issue contains about two-fifths fiction, in addition to illustrated features and departments. We are actively in the market for well-written fiction, between 2000 and 14,000 words; first-person true tales, between 500 and 2000; illustrated fact articles, between 1000 and 4000; and poems, between 12 and 32 lines—each with a well developed railroad background but not too technical for the general public. Most of our fact articles are bought on assignment. Authors should query us beforehand, stating the highlights of the proposed subject and qualifications for writing it. We welcome new fact and fiction writers and poets, especially those who have sold to other magazines. MSS. are read promptly and good rates are paid on acceptance."

*Champion Sports*, 67 W. 44th St., New York, bi-monthly fiction magazine of the Ace Magazines group, covers all sports in season, college and professional. Woman interest is desired in novelettes but is not necessary in shorts. No first-person stories. "We want strongly plotted stories with dramatic character conflict," writes A. A. Wyn, editor. Good rates are announced, payable on acceptance or shortly after.

Empire State Book Company, 1472 Broadway, New York, is a book publishing firm which specializes in educational publications, principally school books. Payment is by royalties; the author is sometimes required to contribute to the cost of publication.

*Super Western*, 67 W. 44th St., New York, has replaced *Golden West* as a title of the Ace Magazines group (Magazine Publishers and Periodical House). Edited by A. A. Wyn, it seeks pioneer Western short-stories under 6000 words, novelettes of 10,000 to 12,000, and novels of 45,000 words. Payment is at 1/2 cent a word and up, on publication.

*Personal Adventure Stories* has appeared under the banner of Resolute Publications, Inc., an affiliate of Ultem Publications, and the address is now 404 Fourth Ave., New York. J. A. Rosefield, editor, writes: "Stories for us must be true, first-person tales, full of danger, suspense, and unusual situations. Attention is called to our special feature department, 'Close Shaves from Death,' stories running from 500 to 1000 words. Prizes also are given for daredevil stories of men and women who went out hunting for danger and trouble and found plenty. Also to our 'Fotaventures,' an opening for the amateur to send in dramatic photographs and win a prize. For general material our preferred length is from 2000 to 4000 words." The magazine announces rates of 1 to 1 1/2 cents a word, on acceptance.

*The Parents' Magazine*, 9 E. 40th St., New York, deals with child care and parent education. Mrs. Clara Savage Littledale, editor, writes: "Because this is a growing field of interest there is no dearth of material—on the contrary, the number of manuscripts submitted to us is constantly increasing. We want interesting, well-written reports of scientific research and authoritative articles dealing with the many phases of child care and training. These articles are usually contributed by persons who are outstanding in the field of parent education. We also buy short 'experience articles' from parents, teachers, or others who are closely associated with children and who can present their handling of a particular problem or situation in such a way that it is of practical help to others. We publish few journalistic articles giving general information in this field and fewer personality write-ups. The test of our material is that the average parent, reading it, shall find very definite help in meeting daily problems of child care. We are glad to have the masculine point of view presented. Our articles run from 1500 to 3000 words in length. We pay \$50 for our leading full-length articles. We publish a little poetry, practically no fiction, and all our material must be written for adults. We are not interested in any juvenile material. Our service departments accept short contributions."

*Home Friend Magazine*, 1411 Wyandotte St., Kansas City, Mo., apparently has been revived as a publication separate from *Illustrated Mechanics*. E. A. Weishaar, editor, sends word that "beginning with the August issue, it will be in the market for stories, between 1200 and 3500 words, of the romantic type." He adds: "We also want poems of inspirational nature, and articles of special interest to the small-town and farm woman. We pay on acceptance; for fiction, 1/4 to 1/2 cent per word, for poems, from 10 to 25 cents per line."

Frederick Clayton has resigned as fiction editor of *Liberty*. His successor has not yet been announced.

*Journal of Education*, 6 Park St., Boston, is not in the market for material.

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### My Service SELLS Film Stories . . . . .

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Racine, Wis.

### NOTICE: SHORT STORY WRITERS . . .

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### Every Author Needs THE WRITER'S MONTHLY

This magazine is a monthly guide for his efforts. It contains monthly marketing lists and news, carefully chosen experience and practical-information articles, and condensed and pointed comment. Many people count on its departmental information. If you are writing regularly, take this magazine regularly.

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**THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, Dept. AJ,**  
Springfield, Mass.

*Forward*, 420 Witherspoon Bldg., Philadelphia, Presbyterian church paper edited by Park Hays Miller, is directed toward young people 18 to 23 years of age. Mr. Miller writes: "This definite age stipulation should not give the writer the idea that we want to show our young readers an artificial world in which there are neither adults nor infants; but we do prefer that the hero or heroine be a young person. We like stories of family life, college, the young person's business world, young people in church and social-service work, any helpful story of adjusting personality and improving character. More desirable than elaborate plot is adequate characterization. We cannot use more than 3000 words, and that is not enough room for much plot complication, unless color is sacrificed. We are increasingly watchful for better writing. We do not, however, want slight, atmospheric stories; there must be a real moment of climax and drama. Nor can we use propaganda thinly disguised by fiction, although we are vitally interested in peace, race relations, temperance. Wherever these themes can be forcefully and naturally handled, we are an eager market. We want serials of eight to ten chapters, 3000 words per chapter. Editorial articles about 800 words in length, written in an informal, conversational manner, will be welcomed. They must have the young person's viewpoint. We don't want adults 'talking down' to boys and girls. Illustrated articles of 900 words, on nearly any educational subject, if not the prosy, rehashed-Britannica type of thing, are in demand. The style must be easy and of interest to young people. We will be glad to look at photos for our cover and our feature page of pictures." Rates, about ½ cent a word, on acceptance.

Dime Publications, Inc., a concern which recently passed into receivership in New York, is not in any way connected with Popular Publications, Inc., which issues *Dime Detective*, *Dime Mystery*, *Dime Sports*, and *Dime Western Magazine*. This statement is published because confusion between the names might have caused some to assume erroneously that these latter substantial publications were involved.

J. A. Patterson, artist, 1119 N. Jefferson, Springfield, Mo., writes: "I am in the market for gags suitable for cartoons similar to those published in *Collier's*, the *Post*, *Hooey*, etc. I will report on material in one week and pay from 30 to 50 per cent of the price I receive for the finished drawing. My work appears in over forty magazines and I have a ready market for good original gags of all kinds."

King Features Syndicate, Inc., 235 E. 45th St., New York, writes: "We syndicate no short-stories or poems. We obtain our crossword puzzles from sources with which we have a permanent arrangement. In fact, all the art and literary features we offer are produced by artists regularly employed, and we are not an outlet for the work of free-lances." S. S. Paquin, daily feature editor, sends this information so that writers may be saved the trouble and disappointment of submitting work for which there is no possibility of acceptance.

*Tone*, announced by George Fein & Co., 2116 Arch St., Philadelphia, which recently called for material, writes that it is no longer in the market. Paul Muchnick is editor.

*Popular Service Magazine*, P. O. Box 5859, Detroit, Mich., which announced itself as in the market for material, offering prompt payment on acceptance, recently informed a contributor that manuscripts are being held indefinitely pending a decision as to whether the magazine will be published, and that payment will be made on publication if used.

*Home, Garden & Hobby*, Box 254, Des Moines, Ia., which announced plans for publication and called for material last month, has suspended publication.



*Life*, 135 E. 42nd St., New York, offers as minimum rates for acceptable photographs, \$5 each. This includes purchase of all rights, including resale and re-use. It prefers glossy 5x7 or 8x10 prints, unmounted. Contributor's name and address must be on the back of every print. Complete captions must be type-written and pasted on the back of each print. They should explain what is going on in the picture, giving full names of people involved when such information is of value. Contributors are invited to send the following information for the editorial files: Name and address; type of photographic equipment available; time available for photographic work; types of pictures you are interested in taking; subjects and places you have photographed, and other information about your work. Pictures, to be acceptable, must be informative, and must portray events from news angles that have dramatic picture-reader interest. Certain departments appear quite regularly in each issue, such as: Special feature stories in pictures; Life on the American Newsfront; the Camera Overseas; Picture Stories in one to a dozen or more photos; Science; Life Visits a Party; Private Lives; Pictures-to-the-Editors. More detailed outlines of requirements will be sent to contributors by Willard D. Morgan, contributions editor, to whom all correspondence about picture contributions should be addressed.

*Town Tidings*, now located at Ellicott Square, Buffalo, N. Y., is edited by B. C. Webster, who writes: "Our particular need is for short humorous yarns of less than 1000 words. They must be smartly written to appeal to a class readers audience. We also require short humorous anecdotes which can be given a local twist. They should be written in light, easy style and be up to four or five hundred words or less. They must be original and not concocted from some old pattern. In many respects *Town Tidings* is a small-town *New Yorker*. We are overstocked with verse. We do not need shorts longer than 1000 words, or thereabout. We will soon be in the market for cartoons. Payment is made after publication at approximately 1 cent per word."

Young's Photo Shop, 118 S. Orange St., Glendale, Calif., Ashley N. Chandler, secretary, writes: "Barry & Associates, a new greeting card and novelty house, of this city, advise us they are now considering suitable verse, for Christmas and Thanksgiving cards, and will want more, of the more than 50 types of greeting cards they are getting out. Their wants are quite distinctive, as they are using colored reproductions of the famous Godey Prints and the verse must, necessarily, conform. However, Mr. Barry tells us they intend accepting many verses from new writers. Submit through us, for the present."

*Expositor and the Homiletic Review*, 15 Caxton Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio, uses articles up to 2000 words giving practical plans and programs of educational and inspirational value on any phase of parish administration. Payment, according to Jos. McCray Ramsey, editor, is made on publication at no set rate.

The Bobbs-Merrill Co., book publishers, Indianapolis and New York, announce the appointment of Burford Lorimer as New York editor, succeeding Lynn Carriger. Mr. Lorimer has been connected with various trade papers. He is the son of George Horace Lorimer, retired editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*.

*Light*, 405 Bergen St. Brooklyn, N. Y., considers "religious articles suitable for Catholics and non-Catholics," writes William J. F. Clark, editor. "It also uses short-stories of any kind except 'sexy.' Lengths should be not over 2000 words. Verse is considered. Payment is on publication at 1 cent per word."

*French Night Life Stories*, Dover, Del., apparently is out of business.

## ARE YOU A MARKET HUNTER?

You will be—until you find your true market. I have just made significant sales for three new clients, each to a market I had recommended, each on the first trip.

A Michigan mechanic, who had never sold before, told me of himself. I immediately suggested an article for the *FORUM*, one of the most difficult of all quality magazines, and even supplied a title for this article. The author followed my advice, I edited his copy, and Mr. Leach of the *FORUM* took the article immediately. There will be nation-wide publicity about it shortly.

A Nebraska writer, having no success with detective stories, did a western at my insistence. That first western has just sold; he realizes now he is on the right track.

A California client with a flair for the off-trail, turned out a story I requested after I had wired him a new market call. Result, sale to the market I indicated, with a bonus of 25% above regular rates and an order for many more stories of the same type, at gradually increasing rates.

Month after month I've indicated the success of writers for whose particular abilities I have found markets. If you want me to help you in the same way, tell me what you can about yourself—frankly and freely. The more you tell me, the better will I know what markets you are suited for and how to help you reach them in the shortest possible time. Once I know what you can do best, I'll work with you from outline to finished manuscript—and when you're ready, I'll get assignments for you, as I do for many of the writers working with me.

After I make a couple of sales for you, I drop all fees. My sales commission is 10%. My rates for personal, detailed analysis, suggested revision, and experienced marketing of your manuscripts are: \$1 up to 4,000 words; 50c per thousand words thereafter. All books over 50,000 words, \$24; poems, 50c each. No other fees. No "collaborations." Resubmissions free—always.

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My little paper, "D'ORSAYGRAM," which I publish from time to time, contains some 60,000 words of articles on writing, selling, plotting, etc. Copies of the last issue (November) still available, and sent gratis on request.

### LAURENCE R. D'ORSAY

102 Beaudette Bldg. Beverly Hills, Calif.

Parade of Youth News Service, 1727 K St., N. W., Washington, D. C., uses news stories concerning accomplishments of boys and girls between ages of 8 and 18. "Types preferred are stories reflecting the ingenuity, courage, and determination of youngsters in overcoming obstacles; relating to success in fields of business, science, or invention; stories of true adventures and unusual experiences; sports writeups where boy or girl has gained at least state-wide recognition. We do not want articles about hobbyists, unless their work is extraordinary, or travelogues, stories of mere local interest, or writeups of group activities." J. Lacey Reynolds supplements this information with the following note: "Parade is no longer accepting prepared manuscripts—only tips or leads on news stories. First query us, stating name, age, and full address of boy or girl, giving a short summary of story. Parade contacts boy or girl direct. If story is received and accepted, correspondent is paid upon publication at rate of 1/2 cent a word for material used. Correspondents may submit photographs where they have access to sources the boy or girl could not contact; these are paid for according to amount of words they would take up."

*The Pioneer*, 420 Witherspoon Bldg., Philadelphia, Presbyterian church publication for boys 11 to 15, "is always on the lookout for writers who, through stories and editorials, can make our readers feel that Christian living is thrilling and not a sissy thing," writes Pack Hays Miller, editor. "We are interested in 2800-word stories and serials of ten chapters or less, showing normal boys participating in the everyday adventures of living. We like our heroes to respect not only their own personalities but also the personalities of people of different races and countries. When a writer is skillful enough to avoid even the semblance of preachiness, we wish to include faith in Jesus and loyalty to his principles. We are in need of virile material for our editorial page—articles from 300 to 1000 words. These may be 'straight' articles dealing with personal Christian faith and life, peace, world friendship, conduct problems, high ideals in school, home, and church relationships; or they may be written around an imaginary boy and his problems, possibly in the form of conversation. The main thing is, they must be readable. *The Pioneer* is also in the market for feature articles of 800 to 1200 words, preferably illustrated with photographs. Illustrated handicraft articles are used, as are good poems of boy interest." Rates paid are about 1/2 cent a word, on acceptance.

*Young People's Standard*, 2023 Troost Ave., Kansas City, Mo., a weekly for young people edited by Sylvester T. Ludwig, considers articles of 2000 words and verse up to 20 lines. It is overstocked with fiction. Payment is on acceptance at \$2.50 per thousand words.

*Natural History Magazine*, 77th St. and Central Park, New York, uses popular articles on natural science, exploration, travel, wild life, up to 1500 words, writes Edward M. Weyer, editor. Photo series are desired. Payment is made on acceptance at 1 1/2 cents per word. The magazine is issued by the American Museum of Natural History.

The George R. Keith Company, 507 Polk St., San Francisco, which called recently for short articles on how persons obtained jobs, makes the unsatisfactory stipulation that all contributions become its property, whether winners or non-winners. No manuscripts are returned.

Mathew Bender & Co., 109 State St., Albany, New York, and 296 Broadway, New York, are publishers of single-volume and encyclopedic law texts for all states, annotated statutes, form books, and reports. The company issues from 50 to 100 titles yearly.

Columbia Feature Service and Columbia News Features, 1138 S. Evergreen Ave., Los Angeles, John A. Austin, editor, write: "We are in the market for original short short-stories, 800 to 1500 words in length, for which we pay \$5 and up on acceptance for all rights. Also for short items, verse, and fillers. Rates on these are 1 cent per word up, depending on appeal, payment on acceptance."

*The Reader's Digest*, Pleasantville, New York, announces: "Contributions from readers are welcomed for 'Patter' and 'Toward a More Picturesque Speech.' Contributions cannot be acknowledged or returned. A payment of \$3 is made, upon publication, to the first contributor of each accepted item. In all cases, the source must be given."

*Allure*, and *Sheer Folly*, 1 E. 42nd St., New York, are new sex-tinged publications which appeared under the banner of Yorkhouse Publishers. A request for requirements, rates, and similar information brought no response.

*The Silver Star*, 1607 Eye St., N.W., Washington, D. C., is announced as a new periodical devoted to poetry. E. C. Pharr, editor, writes that no payment probably will be made at first aside from a prize of \$5.00 for the best poem in each issue.

*Brevity*, 211 Stoddard Hall, Oxford, Ohio, is announced by Richard L. Peckinpaugh, managing editor, as "an outlet for the short short and the finer short poetry." It will not pay for manuscripts.

*The Children's Friend*, 425 Fourth St. Minneapolis, edited by Rev. John Peterson, is interested in juvenile material with a religious note—short-stories, up to 2000 words; articles, 1800 to 2000 words; serials of not over seven or eight chapters, very little verse. Payment is made on the tenth of month following acceptance at from \$2.50 to \$3 per thousand words.

*Our Navy*, 191 Joralemon St., Brooklyn, N. Y., uses articles on modern naval subjects, 2000 to 4000 words. They may concern U. S. and other navies. Historical articles about the U. S. navy only, are used. Naval short-stories, full of action, in similar lengths, are considered. Payment, according to C. W. Stevenson, editor, is at varying rates, on publication. Photos of naval subjects, including upright pictures for covers, are purchased at \$5 each.

*Health*, Mountain View, Calif., Alonzo L. Baker, managing editor, writes: "All of our articles are obtained by personal solicitation."

W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 70 Fifth Ave., New York, a book publishing firm, announces that it is no longer in the market for juvenile material, either fiction or non-fiction.

*The Popular*, 79 7th Ave., New York, announces that owing to a change in the frequency of issue, it will not be in the market for stories until the late summer. It is now a bi-monthly.

The Caxton Printers, Caldwell, Idaho, book publishers, whose plant was burned down a few weeks ago, are rebuilding rapidly and are continuing their publication activities in the meantime.

*The Country Home Magazine*, 250 Park Ave., New York, is oversupplied with "back of the book" material. Nothing except timely articles and special features will be considered at present.

*Cinema Arts*, 240 Park Ave., New York, is a new 50-cent monthly devoted to the motion-picture industry. It is aimed at a more mature-minded audience than the general run of screen magazines. Paul F. Husserl is editor. The class of contributors and general format indicate that first-class rates are paid for material.

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Jane Hardy was formerly on the editorial staff of Macmillan Company. She is highly recommended by Harold S. Latham, Ida Tarbell, Henry Goddard Leach, Hamlin Garland, and others.

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Warning:—Readers report that manuscripts submitted in good faith to News Features, 140 W. 42nd St., New York, in response to its call for material last month, bring to the contributor the advertising literature of an agent "recommended" by the concern. Similar experience results from submission of manuscripts to American Features, 1925 E. 17th St., Brooklyn, N.Y. Readers will confer a favor on THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST and their fellow writers by reporting such disillusioning experiences with firms to which we have accorded the courtesy of market notices, upon their representations that they are bona fide buyers of material.

*The Trailer Caravan*, formerly at Union Guardian Bldg., has moved to C. P. A. Bldg., Michigan and 14th Aves., Detroit. Ralph G. Hess is editor; Edwin Fisher Forbes, managing editor. Short-stories up to 2000 words, and articles on trailer travel, as well as fillers, verse, art work and cartoons, and photos, are considered. Payment is made on publication at 1/2 cent a word.

*Scholastic*, 250 E. 43d St., New York, is not in the market for any outside articles, writes M. Mamolen, editorial secretary.

*Popular Stamp Review*, 67 W. 44th St., New York, is not in the market for material.

## PRIZE CONTESTS

*Pictorial Review* announces a contest for ambitious pulp writers. The announcement states: "We will pay \$1,000 for the best short-story written by a pulp author and submitted to us not later than August 15, 1937. By pulp author we mean any person who has had a story published in any pulp magazine since January, 1936, and has not had a story published in a smooth-paper magazine. The judges will be Harry Hansen and Herbert R. Mayes. Stories should be addressed to Contest, *Pictorial Review*, 57th St. at Eighth Ave., New York City. Winner will be announced, if at all possible, within two weeks after close of contest."

Judy Publishing Company, Judy Bldg., 3323 Michigan Blvd., Chicago, publishers of *Dog World Magazine*, announce their annual award for the ten best dog poems in English. Entries must be mailed so that they will be received on or before December 31, 1937. Address *Dog World Annual Poetry Award*. Any number of entries may be submitted by one person. There are no limitations on length or form of verse. Manuscripts will not be returned; contestants should retain duplicates. The prizes are: first, \$25; second \$10; third, \$5, and seven of \$1 each.

First prize in the fourth annual college short-story contest conducted under the auspices of *Story*, was won by Harriet Hassell of the University of Alabama for her story, "History of the South." Second prize was awarded to Alfred Eisner of the University of Wisconsin for "Harlequinade." Mr. Eisner also won an honorable mention. A special third prize was awarded to Constance Stratton of George Washington University. The growing tendency of college students to preoccupy themselves with social themes in their writing was more apparent this year than any year before, according to Whit Burnett and Martha Foley, editors of *Story*.

*Thrilling Love Magazine*, 22 W. 48th St., New York, offers monthly contests calling for letters replying to a romantic problem presented in the magazine.

In *The Ladies Home Journal* for July the following notice appears: "In order to get a new name for flour, we are passing on to the readers of this magazine the opportunity of selecting a new name and giving cash prizes. Think of the many names now



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being used and suggest a new name for flour—one that will appeal to the housewife. The name may be one, two, or three words, separate or combined." There are fifteen cash prizes totalling \$300. First prize is \$50 a month for the remainder of the year; second, \$50; third, \$25; fourth, \$15; the next eleven, \$10 each. Names must be mailed before July 31, 1937. Address Flour Dept., 17 Capper Bldg., Topeka, Kansas.

The Chattanooga Writers' Club, Chattanooga, Tenn., announces the annual Elberta Clark Walker Memorial prize contest for nature poems. A first prize of \$10 and second of \$5 will be awarded. Only one poem per contestant. Submit poems anonymously, with sealed envelope containing author's name and address—title of poem on outside of envelope. Closing date, November 1, 1937. Manuscripts should be mailed to Miss Terrell Tatum, chairman, University of Chattanooga, Chattanooga, Tenn.

Oxford University Press, 114 Fifth Ave., New York, is giving three first prizes of \$10 and an antrium of ants, three second and 25 third prizes, in books and ant houses, to children under 14, for reviews of its recent book, "Little Black Ant." The contest is conducted through book stores and closes September 1. Information can be obtained from local book dealers or the above company.

\$1000 in cash prizes is offered for statements—not exceeding 50 words each—on "Why I'd Like to Own a Palmer Quilted Mattress." Palmer dealers will supply blanks free of charge. Address: The Palmer Brothers Company, 230 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y.

Kellogg's Corn Flakes, Battle Creek, Michigan, are conducting a contest in which prizes ranging from \$5000 to \$1 are offered for best "balloon" captions for pictures published in their advertisements in various national magazines. Closing date—July 12, 1937.

Photoplay awards prizes of \$15, \$10, \$5, and five of \$1 each month for best eight brief letters giving opinions on pictures and players. Address Boos & Bouquets, Photoplay, 122 E. 42nd St., New York.

The following organizations are offering prizes for plays which may interest readers, but on account of the condition that they must be accompanied by entrance fees (\$1 in each case), THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST does not undertake to publish full details:

Theatre Americana, \$100 for best play on an American subject; closing date, Nov. 15, 1937. Address Mrs. Albert L. Estus, 2143 Pepper Drive, Altadena, Calif.

The Berkeley Playmakers, first prize of \$25 and second of \$10 for two best one-act plays. Closing date, September 1, 1937. Address Henry T. Nether-ton, 1814 Blake St., Berkeley, Calif.

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# Trade, Technical and Class Journal Department

JOHN T. BARTLETT, EDITOR

## "NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR UNSOLICITED MANUSCRIPTS"

**D**O some business magazines, placing, "We Are Not Responsible for Unsolicited Manuscripts," on their masthead, make of the disclaimer a "racket"? We would like to have opinions from our readers. A successful Washington, D. C., free lance, Fred E. Kunkel, thinks so.

He sends us copy of a letter addressed to the editor, and the president, of a New York publication. The missive was forceful and determined. We quote the letter, minus names.

Yours of the 12th is received. You state, "The publisher is not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts. On the masthead of the magazine, it is stated that manuscripts are submitted at the risk of the writer."

This is your view. Here's mine. The fact that three different articles sent to you with *return postage* have not been returned, and are covered by your nonchalant letter of the 12th, gives me the impression that you must do this with every other writer. If you think this system is going to hold water much longer, you're mistaken. I'm sending a copy of this to every writers' magazine for their information.

In other words, you either throw away or file all manuscripts coming to your desk, even when accompanied by return postage, using the skull and circle flag at the masthead above mentioned. And hope that the "police" won't be after you.

I'm giving you until January 1st to return my manuscripts, accompanied by return postage, or I'll turn this over to———, attorney in your city, for prosecution. Furthermore, if you have violated the copyright laws, and I find any part of my articles used in your magazine, I'm going to prosecute you also via the Commonwealth attorney *criminally*.

Your attention is invited to the following *Common Law* and if you don't think it's going to fit your back, consult your own attorney:

The original manuscript of any author is the writer's *personal property* as soon as written, just like the watch or coat he owns. No matter to whom it may be sent, no person has the right to use it for profit-making (or any other purpose) by publication, except upon terms satisfactory to the author, either by definite agreement or by implication based upon the assumption that the author is willing to sell at the particular market's regular and known rates. Taking and using another person's uncopyrighted manuscript without that person's consent is *theft*, and a crime in the eyes of the law, punishable by a criminal suit by the state's attorney, and by damages awarded by the civil courts. Failing to return manuscripts accompanied by return postage is equivalent to appropriation, when the author demands their return and again encloses postage. Throwing manuscripts into the wastebasket and not returning them to writers is construed in law as misappropriation of personal property, and a misdemeanor.

Are there trade journals which, hoisting the "skull and circle" flag, deny the use of material while appropriating it, only paying if the writer learns of publication and makes demand?

Do other editors, declaring no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts, handle submissions in a brutally careless way?

THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST would like opinions of readers—with names and facts. Incidentally, we have written the publication to which our Washington reader talked in such plain terms.

## LITERARY MARKET TIPS

### In the Trade, Technical and Class Journal Field

*The Restaurant Man*, 1457 Broadway, New York, is only local in scope and devoted to local interests, and is, therefore, not in the market for material.

*Hardware World*, 160 N. La Salle St., Chicago. Henry E. Ashmun, editor, announces that hereafter payment will be made upon publication, rather than acceptance. Rate is 1 cent a word.

*Meat*, Chicago, has moved from 205 W. Wacker Drive, to 2244 Calumet Ave. M. L. Samson has joined the staff as managing editor.

*American Druggist*, 572 Madison Ave., New York, announces that in future all manuscripts should be addressed to Louis J. F. Moore who will be in charge of editorial preparation of the magazine. Howard Stephenson, editor, states: "Mr. Moore is an editor of long experience with whom I have been personally acquainted for a number of years and you can rely upon his good judgment and also his appreciation of good material."

Seabury Quinn, for 18 years associated with *Casket & Sunnyside*, 487 Broadway, New York, as associate editor, managing editor and editor, successively, severed his connection with that magazine May 2. He has not announced his future plans, but it is understood he will hereafter devote himself exclusively to writing. Editorial matter at *Casket & Sunnyside* is being handled by S. M. Weiss.

The Gill Publications, Inc., (*Leathernews*, *Shoe Buyer*, and *Shoe Repairer and Findings Dealer*) have moved from 146 to 111 Summer St. Boston.

Kent B. Stiles resigned, effective June 1, as editor of *Distribution & Warehousing*, 249 W. 39th St., New York, after serving 18 years in that capacity. He will devote his time to free-lance writings. F. Eugene Spooner, who had been managing editor, succeeds Mr. Stiles as editor.

*Plumbing & Heating Trade Journal*, 515 Madison Ave., New York, announces an "Air Conditioning Review" section which will be incorporated as a regular monthly feature. This section is designed to help plumbing and heating dealers capitalize on the fast growing popular acceptance of air conditioning for homes and other buildings.

*Plumbing & Heating News*, new mid-month supplement of *Domestic Engineer*, 1900 Prairie Ave., Chicago, appeared, for the first time, in June. In tabloid form it covers the entire plumbing and heating industry.

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3rd Prize: My help as above for three months	100.00
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5th and 6th Prizes: My help as above on 20,000 words (2 prizes, each worth \$20.00)	40.00
7th and 8th Prizes: My help as above on 10,000 words (2 prizes, each worth \$10.00)	20.00

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My 1936 Beginners' Fiction Contest was tremendously successful in its object of developing talented new writers into regularly selling professionals. 1936 Contest winners, beginners when their prizes were awarded are now regularly receiving my checks for sales to the leading general and women's slicks and through the entire pulp field—sales made possible by my training during their prize periods. At the left one of these beginners tells you of the help he received.

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The 1937 Beginners Fiction Contest is open to all writers who have not sold more than four fiction stories nor had a novel published within the last year. All you need do to enter is to submit a manuscript for my agency service at my regular rates specified below:

My help with your individual writing and selling problems costs \$3.00 on manuscripts up to 2000 words and \$1.00 for each additional thousand words. BOOKS: 25-40,000 words, \$15.00; 41-60,000 words, \$20.00; 61-80,000 words, \$22.50; 81-100,000 words, \$25.00. For this you receive: (1) Immediate recommendation of salable manuscripts to actively buying editors. On American sales I charge 10% commission; on foreign sales, 15%. (2) If your scripts are unsalable, I will render an honest constructive criticism telling you exactly why, and will show you specifically how to revise and reprint those which can be made salable.

Give your talent a real chance by entering your best manuscripts in this Contest immediately. Full details, rules and Contest entry blanks will be furnished on request. Write for them NOW—while you are thinking of it!

### AUGUST LENNIGER

Literary Agent

45 West 45th St., New York

*Meat Merchandising*, 105 S. 9th St., St. Louis, is searching for good ideas in connection with handling of employees and anything that deals with personnel management. Writes Frank J. Maher, managing editor, "We want good stories concerning profitable enterprises that alert meat merchants have entered into to increase their sales; also service ideas. Our most urgent need at this time is funny cartoon ideas for meat markets. We don't want anything that will slur equipment in a market, but anything that has a funny angle will be appreciated and accepted. Our art editor will develop the art work, all we need is the gag. Before sending any complete manuscript, better forward a 200 word summary."

*American Shade & Awning News*, 1117 Florence St., Ft. Worth, Texas, is announced by Tom Murray, as an independent monthly magazine covering the shade, awning, blind, and linoleum industry. Payment of 1/2 cent a word, on acceptance, is offered for suitable articles on selling, management, and construction, \$1 for photos.

The address of M. A. Borreson, former editor of *Office Equipment Merchandiser*, Chicago, which publication has been purchased by *Office*, 377 Broadway, New York, is 2010 Thornwood Ave., Wilmette, Ill. Correspondents who had manuscripts held by *Office Equipment Merchandiser* should get in touch with Mr. Borreson.

*Canadian National Railways Magazine*, now located at 360 McGill St., Montreal, Quebec, Canada, uses very few contributed articles, writes W. S. Thompson, editor, although articles on railroad subjects, from 1000 to 2000 words in length, will be considered. Most of the material is supplied by the staff and employees. For the small amount of material purchased, 1/2 cent a word is paid.

### GOOD CRITICISM

The only bargain in criticism of a story or article in manuscript is that which returns to the writer the full value of the money invested by him. Criticism cannot always transmute a leaden story into gold, but it can, and should, point the writer to producing better work. For you and I sell what we write only when we become practiced in the conscious art of writing what will sell. If this advertisement attracts you, please send for my circulars.

EDWIN L. SABIN

(Manuscript Critic—Literary Adviser)  
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**Q** UERIES a subscriber, "Why is it necessary for me to use A. & J. criticism service? Isn't the purpose of the articles, published every month in the magazine, to enable subscribers to prepare and sell stories?"

It is true that the editorial columns of **The Author & Journalist** furnish expert information and instruction, and that such is intended to enable readers to write with success. Many do, as thousands of grateful letters prove. However, editorial material, necessarily, is not prepared for individuals, but for groups of readers. It can tell how to do a certain literary task. It cannot, however, check the work of a reader, and show him in what respect he is failing.

**Author & Journalist** criticism service is, for many writers, an indispensable supplement to general knowledge of writing acquired from textbooks, lectures, and articles on writing. Unquestionably, there exists a large group whose education in writing, carried on through the general agencies mentioned, has stopped just short of success. Many of these need only the specific personal service of an expert critic to arrive at sales.

Creative blindness, or inability to judge one's own work, is a common affliction of professionals; no wonder that it should be the common characteristic of beginners. The A. & J. critic, with clear eyes, examines a manuscript the failure of which to gain acceptance baffled its writer. Obvious faults, often easily remedied, are discovered. Inconsistencies which may have destroyed appeal to editors are exposed. Elements of strength are pointed out. The Progress Chart, rating the manuscript for 19 fundamentals, is carefully prepared.

The best marketing counsel to be had is given; what must be done to the manuscript to make it salable; where it should be submitted. Often, the writer is wisely counselled in respect to his future work. Finally, every criticism passes for review before Willard E. Hawkins, Editor. The small fee charged for this personal service puts the **Author & Journalist** critics within the reach of every reader—\$2 for the first 1000 words, 50 cents for each additional thousand to 10,000; for longer manuscripts, 40 cents per thousand. Criticism fee and return postage should accompany manuscripts.

SEND IN YOUR MANUSCRIPTS TODAY!

## **AUTHOR & JOURNALIST CRITICISM SERVICE**

1837 Champa Street

Denver, Colo.

# If You Wish Sales Service - - - -

Many readers are more interested in making an immediate marketing test of their manuscripts than in obtaining criticism and counsel. For such clients **THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST Sales Agency** is maintained.

The Agency offers many advantages over the writer's individual effort. First, it eliminates resultless and expensive submission and mailing labor. **THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST** Staff examines each manuscript expertly against the background of its down-to-the-minute knowledge of magazines and their current editorial needs. If the manuscript is not considered salable, it is returned to the writer at once. A brief letter of opinion accompanies.

If the manuscript is deemed salable, it is expertly offered to magazines in an effort to accomplish a sale. When checks are received from publishers, **THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST** makes settlements promptly, less 10% commission, minimum commission, \$4.

To use **THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST Sales Agency**, you need only submit your manuscript with reading fee (\$1 for the first 1000 words in each manuscript, 25 cents for each additional 1000 words) and return postage.

The Agency does not market poetry, photoplays, syndicate features or columns, forlorn hopes, or material of limited appeal. Its services are offered for good fiction and articles.  
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